



• INFO memo - Dec. 5, 2003

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Shredded Police Reports Recycled

There may be some who believe we're developing into a "paperless world," but even in this age of technology there's still a place for paper...a lot of paper!

Danielle Roush noticed all the paper being used, shredded and then thrown away at the Broken Arrow Police Department when she started working in the communications department five years ago. During an Employee Advisory Committee meeting a few months ago she listened to department representatives talk about the problem of waste, and she came back to the PD with an idea.

That idea has now been put into action, and shredded paper documents at the Police Station are no longer thrown away. They are bagged up, picked up and recycled.

"Every Friday morning they come pick it up," said Danielle. That means every Thursday night, when she ends her shift, Roush carried out 4 to 10 bags of shredded documents to the collection site.

"They" in this case is National Waste Recycling. The company provides a 95 gallon container at the station. When it is filled, it is set out for pickup.

Computers may have taken over a lot of the detail work in City government, including the Police Department. But there are still tons of records, reports, citations and more produced each year. And, when the Police are through with those, they must be shredded for security and privacy reasons.

Roush took her idea to then Acting Police Chief Rick Ross and got the go-ahead for the project. The recycling has been going on for about four months now.

Holidays, New Landfill Slow Trash Pickups

A new landfill, a longer route, a two-day holiday and manpower shortages...all the ingredients were there for curbside trash pickups this past week. The problems were even worse than Public Works Director Dave Wooden feared, however.

Most holidays cause only minor inconveniences. But the two-day Thanksgiving holiday meant that Broken Arrowans did not have a curbside pickup from Monday and Tuesday before the holiday until the Monday and Tuesday after. And for many of them, there was an extra half-day delay.

“When a holiday results in a double pickup,” explained Wooden, “the chance that the crews will not be able to complete the pickup on the scheduled day always exists. The way things fell into place this last week, though, made it extra rough on everyone.”

It started when the Broken Arrow Landfill reached capacity and closed on Nov. 7. The City knew this was coming, and had already contracted with a landfill in Porter, which is nine miles further than the one crews had been using. That, Wooden said, was not a big problem until Monday, Dec. 1, “when the Wagoner County Commissioner informed us that we could no longer use the road from the turnpike to the landfill, as the trash trucks were damaging the road. This resulted in our City trucks using another route, which took 25 minutes longer than the original.”

Then over the holiday, the trash load was much heavier than usual, said Wooden. On a normal day this time of year, each sanitation division crew will pick up 12 to 15 loads of trash. That means each truck will make at least one trip to the landfill during the day.

“On Dec. 1 and 2,” said Wooden, “the crews picked up 39 loads each day. That meant each truck was going to the landfill at least three times each day. Some went four times. The extra travel time resulted in 75 minutes of lost pickup time because of the change in routes. This was the highest two-day load total ever picked up by City crews.”

Making the problems even worse was the fact that the landfill closed at 5 p.m. Crews can pack their trucks, which they did until 9:30 p.m. But they had to wait until first thing the next morning to make another landfill trip.

But, Wooden said, the problems are magnified by manpower shortages. “Due to a hiring freeze in the City, the Sanitation Division now has only 22 of its authorized 34 personnel. Acting City Manager Gary Blackford authorized hiring additional employees last week, and we are currently looking for new employees.”

Because of those problems this week, Wooden said the City has now contracted with a new landfill that stays open until 7 p.m. The hiring of new personnel will also be a huge help.

“The Sanitation crews take pride in their work, and stay on the job as long as they have a place to put one more bag of trash,” said Wooden. “Sometimes the situation is such that we cannot get to everyone when they are scheduled for pickups. I can assure our residents, though, that whenever that happens, for whatever reason, our crews will be there early the next morning to complete the job.”

Normal pickup schedules remain Monday and Thursday for residents north of Washington and Tuesday-Friday for those south of Washington. There are no pickups on Wednesday or Saturday unless a holiday falls on a Monday. In that event, pickups will be pushed back to Tuesday and Wednesday.

And Speaking of Holidays...

Christmas may still be a three weeks away, but the City's holiday schedule has been set.

Employees will have Christmas Day (Dec. 25) off, as well as New Year's Day (Jan. 1). Both holidays fall on Thursdays this year.

That means that employees will have only the one day as a holiday. City offices will be open on the Fridays after Christmas and New Year's. Acting City Manager Gary Blackford announced this week that City offices could close down at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Christmas Eve.

As far as trash pickups are concerned, those customers with Monday-Thursday service will have pickups only on Monday of those weeks. Those on the Tuesday-Friday routes will have normally scheduled pickups.

City Inspector Praised

The owner of a 1903 home in Broken Arrow who has been doing a restoration of the property wrote to the Inspections Department recently in praise of Paul Bobbett, who had been working with him in being sure everything was done according to codes.

"I want to thank you for all of your support and assistance with the project," said Patrick Harrington. "I think that bringing back a 1903 home is worthwhile. Special thanks to Paul, whose professionalism made my work much easier."

City Ready for Christmas Parade

Police Sgt. Ed Ferguson has once again been working with the Broken Arrow Civitans in preparation for Saturday's (Dec. 6) Christmas Parade downtown.

Ferguson, a Traffic Specialist for the BAPD, has become a parade specialist as well. He has had concerns in recent years as the parades have grown larger and larger – not just at Christmas, but Rooster Days, Flag Day, Homecoming, etc.

This Saturday a new dispersal route will be used, with Central Park designated as the parade end and pickup point. For spectators there will be little difference. The parade will still begin at Main and College (by the old Central Middle School), and continue south on Main to the park.

All floats will funnel through the south end of the Community Center parking lot to the softball and tennis court parking areas. Bands will exit at the west parking lot, while horses will go to the detention area on Mason, just east of Main.